



U.S. Department of  
Transportation  
Office of the Secretary  
of Transportation



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## TRANSIT BENEFIT PROGRAM BULLETIN

**Bulletin Number:** TSB-2013 - 05

**Date:** November 1, 2012

**SUBJECT:** **Elimination of WMATA 3<sup>rd</sup> Party Allocations (to include van pools) for TRANServe Federal Agencies**

**PURPOSE:** Effective for the January 2013 benefit month, there will be no access to 3<sup>rd</sup> party passenger allocations. TRANServe participants will no longer be able to allocate the transit benefit to 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors via the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) SmartBenefits® Program. *Note: The use of SmartBenefits® on Metrobus, Metrorail and local bus systems using the SmarTrip® card are excluded.*

**BACKGROUND:** Currently, the allocation service provided by WMATA allows the transit benefit to accumulate on participant accounts with 3<sup>rd</sup> party vendors (van pools, commuter buses, etc.). TRANServe has worked diligently with WMATA to ensure that the transit benefit received by our participants and used within the WMATA system meets statutory and regulatory compliance.

The Office of Management and Budget (OMB), on April 27, 2012, directed that accumulated transit benefit funds held in excess of the actual monthly commuting cost (as required under 26 CFR 1.132-9) be returned to the U.S. Department of the Treasury and that federal agencies strengthen internal controls to ensure compliance with the Federal Transit Benefit Program. To accomplish these directives, OMB designated the U.S. Department of Transportation (DOT), Office of Assistant Secretary for Administration [TRANServe], as the lead Federal agency to inform 3<sup>rd</sup> party companies (to include commercial vanpools) of the Federal internal controls that govern the Transit Benefit Program and to assist in the timely return of the Federal funds.

**INFORMATION:** For more information concerning the elimination of the WMATA SmartBenefits® 3rd Party allocation service, please contact your Transit Benefit Manager. Additional information is provided in the attachment to this bulletin.